

Message Text

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TAGS: PGOV, WB, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S INTERPRETATION OF QA

REF: MOSCOW 4011

1. SUMMARY: IN ARTICLE IN APRIL 1 JOURNAL OF SOVIET-GERMAN FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, SOVIET AMBASSADOR YEFREMOV SAID QA HAD BEEN FUNCTIONING " NOT SO BADLY," BUT CAUTIONED " WEST" AGAINST SEEKING " IMPROVEMENTS" THAT COULD UPSET DELICATE BALANCE ACHIEVED IN AGREEMENT. YEFREMOV SPOKE OPTIMISTICALLY ABOUT BUILDING BILATERAL USSR-" WESTBERLIN" RELATIONS. END SUMMARY

2. SPECIAL ISSUE OF SLICK- COVER GERMAN- SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY (DSF) QUARTERLY, KEYED TO SOVIET INDUSTRIAL EXHIBIT SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN WEST BERLIN APRIL 30, CONTAINED ARTICLES BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO GDR YEFREMOV AND USSR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT BORISOV.
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YEFREMOV'S ARTICLE, ENTITLED, " AN HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT FOR THE CITY", DESCRIBED " FOUR POWER AGREEMENT

ON WESTBERLIN" AS MILESTONE IN POSTWAR BERLIN DEVELOPMENT. YEFREMOV SAID THERE HAD BEEN INITIAL DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING QA BUT IT WAS CURRENTLY WORKING OUT "NOT SO BADLY." USSR HAD ALREADY ACQUIRED SOME PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH ESTABLISHMENT OF "BILATERAL EXCHANGES IN ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, NS ARE COMMONLY REGARDED HERE AS TANTA-MOUNT TO SURRENDER BECAUSE OF THE DISPARITY IN POWER BETWEEN THE ROC AND PRC. INDEED, IDEOLOGY, EMOTION, INDOCTRINATION AND PAST EXPERIENCE HAVE SHAPED A POSTURE WHICH VIEWS CONSENT TO SUCH NEGOTIATIONS AS UNDERMINING THE SITUATION AT THE OUTSET, LEADING INEVITABLY TO THE TAKEOVER OF TAIWAN. PEKING'S INITIAL EFFORTS TO TEMPT THE ROC LEADERSHIP INTO POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS HAVE HAD NO VISIBLE EFFECT ON THIS DEEP-SEATED AVERSION TO NEGOTIATIONS.

12. OVER THE YEARS, CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN THE POPULACE MIGHT SHOW LESS ANTIPATHY TOWARD TALKS WITH THE PRC. THE GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY CONCERNED THAT THE GROWING REUNIFICATION SENTIMENT AMONG CHINESE INTELLECTUALS IN THE U. S. COULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON LOCAL THINKING. ARRESTS AND INTERROGATIONS OF SOME STUDENTS AND INTELLECTUALS FOR "REUNIFICATION" ACTIVITIES SUGGEST A CERTAIN DEGREE OF SUSCEPTIBILITY, ALTHOUGH IT IS DOUBTFUL THIS HAS REACHED PROPORTIONS OF ANY CONSEQUENCE. ADVERSE DEVELOPMENTS, INCLUDING ECONOMIC ADVERSES, COULD STIMULATE VULNERABILITY TO PRESSURES TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE PRC. HOWEVER, AT THE PRESENT TIME, NO IMPERATIVE IS PERCEIVED TO RISK EXCHANGING GENERALLY SATISFACTORY CONDITIONS ON TAIWAN FOR SUBMISSION TO -- OR EVEN CONTACT WITH -- A REGIME WHOSE EXCESSES, PAST FAILURES AND DEVELOPMENT ALONG VASTLY DIFFERENT SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LINES CONTINUE TO CAUSE IT TO BE REGARDED HERE AS ANATHEMA.

13. SEPARATENESS THE PREFERRED OPTION. TAIWAN'S UNQUALIFIED PREFERENCE IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IS TO
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REMAIN SEPARATE FROM THE MAINLAND. SENTIMENT IN FAVOR OF FORMAL INDEPENDENCE

FROM THE MAINLAND, ALWAYS STRONG AMONG TAIWANESE, IS STILL WIDESPREAD AND TO SOME EXTENT REINFORCED BY MAINLANDERS HERE WHO, WHILE LEARY OF INDEPENDENCE," ADVOCATE A FORMALIZED "SEPARATENESS" AS THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST THE PRC'S UNIFICATION APPEALS. AT A LESS EMOTIONAL LEVEL, HOWEVER, THERE SEEMS TO BE GROWING RECOGNITION THAT U. S. AND JAPANESE POLICY MAY HAVE FORECLOSED THE OPTION OF FORMALLY DECLARED INDE-

PENDENCE AND THAT A FORMAL CHANGE OF ANY KIND IN TAIWAN'S STATUS IS NOT FEASIBLE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE BECAUSE OF CONTINUING OPPOSITION FROM MANY KMT ELEMENTS, THE RISK OF VIOLENTLY ANTAGONIZING PEKING, AND THE FEAR OF JEOPARDIZING THE U. S. TREATY COMMITMENT.

14. MOST PEOPLE SEEM TO EXPECT AN INDEFINITE CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO. SOME REMAIN OPTIMISTIC THAT TAIWAN MAY EVENTUALLY ESTABLISH A NEW INTERNATIONAL POSITION, PERHAPS AFTER ABANDONING ITS CLAIMS TO THE MAINLAND. OTHERS SOMETIMES DISPLAY PESSIMISM ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF INDEFINITE SEPARATISM. EVEN THE PESSIMISTS TEND TO SEEK SOME ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN THE ROC AND PRC AS A LONG- TERM PROCESS WHICH NEED NOT PRECLUDE THE EVOLUTION OF A SATISFACTORY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS FOR THE ISLAND.

15. ECONOMIC OUTLOOK. OPTIMISM PERMEATES TAIWAN'S FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS, BUT THE GOVERNMENT AND MUCH OF THE POPULATION REALIZE THAT THEIR ECONOMIC FUTURE IS CRITICALLY DEPENDENT ON NOT ENTIRELY PREDICATABLE OUTSIDE FORCES. SINCE THE DOMESTIC MARKET IS NEITHER LARGE NOR AFFLUENT ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A LARGE- SCALE INDUSTRIAL BASE, MAINTENANCE OF EXPORT GROWTH IS ESSENTIAL FOR CONTINUED ECONOMIC PROGRESS. EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO DIVERSIFY THE DIRECTION OF TRADE, WHICH IS NOW HEAVILY CONCENTRATED IN THE U. S. AND JAPANESE MARKETS. HOWEVER, TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE ON THE U. S. AS A TRADING AND INVESTMENT PARTNER CONTINUES TO GROW.

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HENCE THERE IS SPECIAL CONCERN THAT THE UNITED STATES MAY SUCCUMB TO PROTECTIONISM, OR THAT JAPAN MAY GIVE IN TO POLITICAL PRESSURES FROM THE PRC AND SEVERELY CURTAIL ITS ECONOMIC AND COMMUNICATIONS TIES WITH TAIWAN. IN ADDITION TO TRADE, TAIWAN IS ALSO DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN SOURCES, PARTICULARLY FOREIGN INVESTMENT, FOR TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFER AND MANAGERIAL EXPERTISE. THIS, IN TURN, REMAINS PREDICATED ON CONTINUED FOREIGN CONFIDENCE IN TAIWAN AND ULTIMATELY ON A CONTINUED U. S. COMMITMENT TO THE ISLAND'S SECURITY.

16. DEFENSIVE ORIENTATION. WHILE NOT AS SANGUINE AS THE UNITED STATES, THE ROC ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE PRC'S PRESENT POLITICAL POLICIES HELP RESTRAIN IT FROM MILITARY ADVENTURE. MOREOVER, THE ROC APPRECIATES THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PRC MILITARY THREAT AGAINST TAIWAN HAS

BEEN REDUCED BY PEKING' S PREOCCUPATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THESE CONSIDERATIONS TO SOME EXTENT HAVE MITIGATED ROC CONCERN OVER THE GAP IN ROC- PRC MILITARY CAPABILITIES, WHICH IS GREAT AND INCREASING RAPIDLY.

17. THE ROC' S OWN FORCES ARE IN REASONABLY GOOD SHAPE: EQUIPMENT IS BEING MODERNIZED, THOUGH AT A SLOWER PACE THAN DESIRED BY THE ROC MILITARY; THE ARMED FORCES ARE RELATIVELY WELL TRAINED AND WELL LED; AND THE GOVERNMENT CAN COUNT ON HIGH MORALE FOR DEFENSE OF THE ISLAND.

GENERALLY, THERE IS A FEELING THAT EVEN THOUGH THE ROC PROBABLY COULD NOT STAND UP ALONE TO A DETERMINED PRC ASSAULT, ROC FORCES CONSTITUTE A CREDIBLE DETERRENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE U. S. DEFENSE COMMITMENT, SUBSTANTIAL PRC MILITARY DEFICIENCIES, AND CONTINUED PRESSURE ON THE PRC FROM THE SOVIETS.

18. THE ROC' S GREATER PREOCCUPATIL WITH DEFENDING WHAT IT HAS RATHER THAN DWELLING ON WHAT IT WOULD LIKE HAS RESULTED IN A PRIMARILY DEFENSIVE ORIENTATION. CLEARER APPRECIATION OF U. S. POLICY HAS ALSO DETERRED ADVENTEROUS ACTS. MILITARY EXPENDITURES CONTINUE AT APPROXIMATELY 10 PERCENT

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AND THERE IS NOT MUCH PROSPECT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL EITHER DRAMATICALLY INCREASE MILITARY SPENDING IN A DISPLAY OF SELF- RELIANCE OR REDUCE MILITARY SPENDING IN RESPONSE TO REDUCED MILITARY TENSIONS AND GROWING DEMANDS OF THE CIVILIAN SECTOR. WITHIN THE RATHER SET PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL BUDGET, HOWEVER, THE ROC SEEMS TO BE IN THE PROCESS OF SLOWLY READJUSTING TOWARD SMALLER, MORE MODERN, ELITE, AND MOBILE DEFENSE FORCES.

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